



Town Clerk
Les Trigg

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27 January 2020

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **TOWN COUNCIL**, to be held in the **Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone**, on **TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2020 at 7.00pm** when the following business will be transacted.

Les Trigg
Town Clerk

Agenda

1. **To receive apologies for absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**
3. **Representations from Members of the Public**
4. **To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 3 December 2019, Minute No's. C20/088 – C20/097 (attached)**
5. **To receive the draft minutes and decisions of the under mentioned Committees:**
 - a) General Purposes Committee meeting held on 3 December 2019, Minute Numbers GP20/132 – GP20/149 (attached)
 - b) Planning Committee meeting held on 3 December 2019, Minute Numbers P20/073 – P20/078 (attached)
 - c) Planning Committee meeting held on 17 December 2019, Minute Numbers P20/079 – P20/084 (attached)

- d) Planning Committee meeting held on 7 January 2020, Minute Numbers P20/085 – P20/090 (attached)
 - e) General Purposes Committee meeting held on 21 January 2020, Minute Numbers GP20/150 – GP20/166 (attached)
6. **To Consider the Council's Budget for 2020-21 and to set the Council Tax for the Year**
To Consider the report of the Town Clerk (attached).
7. **Local Government Transparency Code 2015**
Openness of Public Bodies Regulations 2014

Information for Quarter ending 31 December 2019 (attached)
8. **To receive the forthcoming Civic Announcements** (attached)
9. **To receive the Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's Reports of Engagements**
(attached)
10. **Exclusion of the Public and Press**
To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next item of business is discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate.
11. **To confirm as a correct record the confidential minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 3 December 2019, Minute Numbers C20/088, C20/096 and C20/097**
(attached).
12. **To receive the draft confidential minutes and decisions of the undermentioned Committees:**
 - a) General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 3 December 2019, Minute Numbers GP20/132 and GP20/149 (attached).
 - b) General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 21 January 2020, Minute Numbers GP20/150 and GP20/166 (attached).

Members of the public are welcome to attend the Council Meeting as observers. Persons attending should enter the Council Offices through the rear entrance door (adjacent to the car park). The Council Chamber is at the top of the stairs.

Stone Town Council

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 3 December 2019

PRESENT: Councillor M. Green in the Chair and
Councillors: K. Argyle, A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess, J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies,
Mrs K. Dawson, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, R. Kenney, P. Leason, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft
and R. Townsend.

ABSENT: Councillors: T. Adamson, I. Fordham, M. Hatton and J. Hickling

Before the meeting began Reverend Prebendary Cardinal lead prayers

C20/088 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors T. Adamson, I. Fordham, M. Hatton and
J. Hickling

C20/089 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

None received

C20/090 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None

C20/091 **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on the 5 November 2019
(Minute Numbers C20/076 – C20/087), be approved as a correct record.

C20/092 **Draft Committee Minutes**

RESOLVED:

- a) The draft minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on the
5 November 2019 (Minute Numbers GP20/114 – GP20/131), were noted.
- b) The draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 5

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They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

November 2019 (Minute Numbers P20/061 – P20/066), were noted.

- c) The draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 12 November 2019 (Minute Numbers P20/067 – P20/072), were noted.

C20/093 Civic Announcements

The Civic Announcements, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

C20/094 Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's Reports of Engagements

The Town Mayor's and Deputy Town Mayor's Announcements, which had been previously circulated, were noted.

The meeting was suspended at this point to enable the General Purposes Committee and Planning Committee Meetings to take place.

The Town Council was then reconvened for the confidential items on the agenda.

C20/095 To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next item of business is discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate

RESOLVED: To exclude the Press and Public from the next item of business.

C20/096 Confidential Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Confidential Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on the 5 November 2019, Minute Numbers C20/076, C20/086 and C20/087, be approved as a correct record.

C20/097 Confidential Committee Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) The draft Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 5 November (Minute Numbers GP20/114 and GP20/131), were noted.

TOWN MAYOR

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Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 3 December 2019

PRESENT: Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and
Councillors: K. Argyle, A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess, J. Davies, Mrs L. Davies,
Mrs K. Dawson, M. Green, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, P. Leason, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft
and R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: T. Adamson, I. Fordham, M. Hatton and J. Hickling

GP20/132 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: T. Adamson, I. Fordham, M. Hatton and J. Hickling

GP20/133 Declarations of Interests

None

GP20/134 Requests for Dispensations

None

GP20/135 To receive the report of the County Councillors

County Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Councillor Mrs Hood gave no report on this occasion and wished everyone a very merry Christmas.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP20/136 Representations from Members of the Public

None

GP20/137 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 5 November (Minute Numbers GP20/114 – GP20/131), be approved as a correct record.

GP20/138 Minutes of Sub-Committees

- a) Management Sub-Committee held on 12 November 2019 (Minute Numbers MAN20/015 – MAN20/021), that the draft minutes be noted and

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the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Numbers MAN20/019 and MAN20/020 be adopted.

- b) Estates Sub-Committee held on 12 November 2019 (Minute Numbers EST20/009 – EST20/015), that the draft minutes be noted and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number EST20/015 be adopted.

GP20/139 Budget Monitoring Report – October 2019

The report of the Town Clerk* was noted.

GP20/140 Budget 2020-21 to 2022-23 Overview

The Committee received the report* of the Town Clerk setting out the prospects for the Council's 2020-21 to 2022-23 budget. The report considers the overall position of the Council, the context in which the budget needs to be set and the standstill budget, which is the starting point for determination of the precept for 2020-21.

RESOLVED: To note the standstill budget position for 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 and the issues related to setting the precept.

RESOLVED: That each sub-committee considers its financial needs for the next three years and reports back to the General Purposes Committee on 21 January 2020 with its budget proposals.

GP20/141 Grant Application Process

The Committee considered minor revisions to the Town Council's Grant Aid application process which had been forwarded by the Management Sub-Committee (Minute Number: MAN20/021)).

A revised application form had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the proposed revisions to the Town Council's Grant Aid application form are accepted.

GP20/142 Plan Headstone

The Committee considered the draft Plan Headstone protocol which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the draft Plan Headstone protocol is accepted.

GP20/143 Stafford Safer Neighbourhood Panel

The Committee considered the appointment of Councillors to provide input into a scrutiny review being undertaken by the Stafford Safer Neighbourhood Panel. The terms of reference of the review had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting.

No Councillors were nominated and no volunteers came forward to take on the task.

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GP20/144 Meeting Between HS2 and Stone Railhead Crisis Group

The Committee considered the appointment of a Councillor to represent the Council at meetings between HS2 and the Stone Railhead Crisis Group.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mrs J. Hood represents the Town Council at meetings between HS2 Ltd and the Stone Railhead Crisis Group.

GP20/145 Non-Cheque Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of non-cheque payments made by the Council during the period 1 October to 31 October 2019.

GP20/146 Update from Working Groups:

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Councillor Mrs Hood, advised the Committee that there was no new information to report.

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that the next meeting of the Stone Area Parish Liaison Group would be taking place in January 2020.

Traffic Management in Stone Working Group

Councillor Kenney advised that the next meeting of the working group would be held in the New Year.

VE Day 2020 Commemoration Working Group

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that a meeting of the working group would be held in the New year.

GP20/147 To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council

Stone ATC

Councillor Davies advised that Stone ATC was continuing successfully and that he would be attending a meeting on Wednesday 4 December 2019.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor Thornicroft advised that a meeting of Age Concern Stone & District was scheduled to take place on Friday 6 December 2019.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor T. Kelt advised that a meeting of the Access Group would be held in January 2020. He said that a meeting had taken place with representatives from the Stone Traders Group and traders' views were being taken forward.

Councillor Kelt said that he was considering taking on the task of maintaining and updating the Access Group's website.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Kenney and Councillor Mrs Hood were not aware that any meetings of the Stone Common Plot Trustees had taken place.

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Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

Councillor Mrs Hood reported that no meetings had been held since the recent Annual General Meeting.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Green advised that he had attended the Annual General Meeting of Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association on 2 December. There had not been a quorum for a meeting of the Executive Committee which had resulted in a rescheduling of the date to 6 January 2020.

The meeting was adjourned to enable the Planning Committee meeting and confidential items on the Council Meeting agenda to take place.

The General Purposes Committee was then reconvened for the confidential items on the agenda.

GP20/148 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate

RESOLVED: To exclude the Press and Public from the next item of business.

GP20/149 Confidential Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 5 November 2019 (Minute Numbers GP20/114 and GP20/131), be approved as a correct record.

CHAIRMAN

Stone Town Council – Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 3 December 2019

PRESENT: Councillor J. Davies in the Chair, and
Councillors: K. Argyle, A. Best, Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs L. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson,
M. Green, Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, R. Kenney, P. Leason, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft and
R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: T. Adamson, I. Fordham, M. Hatton and J. Hickling

P20/073 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: T. Adamson, I. Fordham, M. Hatton,
and J. Hickling

P20/074 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

Councillor Mrs Hood abstains from voting on all items.

P20/075 Representations from Members of the Public

None received

P20/076 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 5
November 2019 (Minute Numbers P20/061 – P20/066), be approved as
a correct record.
- b) That the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 12
November 2019 (Minute Numbers P20/067 – P20/072), be approved as
a correct record.

P20/077 Planning Applications

Application Number – 19/31100/FUL

Applicant – Countwise Systems Limited

Location – 41B High Street, Stone

Development – Installation of a pedestrian footfall counter camera

Observations: No objections

Application Number – 19/31416/HOU

Applicant – Mr N. Green

Location – 133 Newcastle Road, Stone

Development – Demolition of existing conservatory. Single storey extension to rear of terraced property

Observations: No objections

Application Number – 19/31298/FUL

Applicant – Mr A. Plant

Location – 40A Oulton Road, Stone

Development – Construction of first floor rear extension to create walk in wardrobe, and replacement of existing low level flat roof with proposed pitched roof

Observations: No objections

Application Number – 19/31502/FUL

Applicant – Shell UK Oil Products

Location – Shell Service Station, Eccleshall Road, Stone

Development – Replacement sales building associated with the existing petrol station, removal of car and jet washes, minor relocation of the HGV fuel island, alterations to the canopy, provision of car parking and associated works

Observations: The Town Council objects to the proposed development in its current form due to serious concerns about the safety of pedestrians, both on the service station forecourt and on the adjoining public highway.

As vehicles are accessing and exiting the service station, the presence of pedestrians is obscured by fixtures such as bins, barriers, signage and hedges. Councillors would like to know how the existing design faults will be rectified and suggest one access and one exit point rather than the current three (combined).

There are also concerns about HGV's exiting the site as the route takes them between the shop and the domestic fuel pumps. This will be extremely hazardous to customers (and their passengers) whilst walking between the pumps and the shop.

P20/078

To note the following items considered under delegated powers where no objections were forwarded to Stafford Borough Council due to no Member asking for the item to be considered by a special meeting of the Committee.

None

CHAIRMAN

Stone Town Council – Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 17 December 2019

PRESENT: Councillor J. Davies in the Chair, and
Councillors: T. Adamson, K. Argyle, A. Best, Mrs L. Davies, I. Fordham, M. Hatton,
Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft and R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs K. Dawson, M. Green (Mayoral duty), J. Hickling,
R. Kenney and P. Leason

P20/079 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors: Mrs K. Dawson, M. Green (Mayoral duty), J. Hickling, R. Kenney and P. Leason

P20/080 **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

Councillor Mrs Hood abstained from voting on all items.

P20/081 **Representations from Members of the Public**

None received

P20/082 **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 3 December 2019 (Minute Numbers P20/073 – P20/078), be approved as a correct record.

P20/083 **Planning Applications**

Application Number – 19/31396/FUL

Applicant – Mr A. Roe (A. J. Roe Properties)

Location – 75 High Street, Stone

Development – Minor material amendment to existing planning approval 18/29499/FUL to amend floor plans and elevations to ground floor extension

Observations: The Town Council raises no objections subject to the Borough Council's support of the Conservation Officer's representation and planning conditions requested on the use of uPVC windows which are inappropriate within the conservation area.

Application Number – 19/31523/HOU

Applicant – Mr R. Hollington

Location – 14 The Redlands, Stone

Development – Conservatory at the rear of the property with demolition of existing extension

Observations: No objections

Application Number – 19/31557/FUL

Applicant – BHG Stone Ltd

Location – Land at St Johns Church, Granville Terrace, Stone

Development – Variation of Condition 2 on APP/Y3425/W/W16/3164139

Observations: No objections

P20/084

To note the following items considered under delegated powers where no objections were forwarded to Stafford Borough Council due to no Member asking for the item to be considered by a special meeting of the Committee.

None

CHAIRMAN

Stone Town Council – Planning Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 7 January 2020

PRESENT: Councillor J. Davies in the Chair, and
Councillors: K. Argyle, A. Best, I. Fordham, Mrs K. Dawson, M. Green, M. Hatton,
Mrs J. Hood, T. Kelt, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft and R. Townsend

ABSENT: Councillors: T. Adamson, Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs L. Davies, J. Hickling, R. Kenney
and P. Leason

P20/085 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: T. Adamson, Mrs L. Davies, J. Hickling,
R. Kenney and P. Leason

P20/086 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

Councillor Mrs Hood abstained from voting on all items.

P20/087 Representations from Members of the Public

None received

P20/088 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 17
December 2019 (Minute Numbers P20/079 – P20/084), be approved as a
correct record.

P20/089 Planning Applications

Application Number – 19/31257/FUL

Applicant – Mr Schreiber (C/o Debtal Architecture Ltd)

Location – 13 High Street, Stone

Development – New external staircase, splitting of existing ground floor retail
unit (A1) into two retail units (A1) and change of use of upper floors to two
residential apartments (C3)

Observations: No objections

Application Number – 19/31330/FUL

Applicant – A. J. Roe Properties

Location – 2 Oulton Road, Stone

Development – Conversion of former tattoo studios (Sui generis) to new fish and chip restaurant and take away and with licence to sell alcohol (class A3)

Observations: The Town Council objects to the development proposal because of the following points of concern:

- Road safety risk to motorists and pedestrians – the location of the shop is not ideal as there will inevitably be inappropriate on street parking from customers who are not willing to park safely, away from the bridge, a major road junction and clear of double yellow road markings.
- Traffic congestion and flow – another consequence of the on street parking that is likely to occur outside a fish and chip takeaway near a busy road junction.
- The arrangements for the delivery of supplies – delivery vehicles will not be able to park outside the restaurant safely and without obstruction.
- Environmental Health aspects – there is no information in the application about the installation of an extractor unit. This equipment will be a necessary requirement in a fish and chip restaurant/takeaway and as they operate noisily, may cause disturbance to neighbouring homes.
- Disposal of rubbish/litter – the arrangements for the disposal rubbish and the management of litter have not been stated in the application.

P20/090

To note the following items considered under delegated powers where no objections were forwarded to Stafford Borough Council due to no Member asking for the item to be considered by a special meeting of the Committee.

None

CHAIRMAN

Stone Town Council – General Purposes Committee

Minutes of the meeting held in the Council Chamber at 15 Station Road, Stone, on Tuesday 21 January 2020

PRESENT: Councillor R. Kenney in the Chair, and
Councillors: T. Adamson, K. Argyle, A. Best, J. Davies, Mrs K. Dawson, I. Fordham,
M. Green, T. Kelt, P. Leason, J. Powell, C. Thornicroft

ABSENT: Councillors: Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs L. Davies, M. Hatton, J. Hickling, Mrs J. Hood and
R. Townsend

GP20/150 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors: Mrs A. Burgess, Mrs L. Davies,
M. Hatton, J. Hickling, Mrs J. Hood and R. Townsend

GP20/151 Declarations of Interests

None

GP20/152 Requests for Dispensations

None

GP20/153 To receive the report of the County Councillors

County Councillor Mrs J. Hood

Councillor Mrs Hood was not in attendance at the meeting.

County Councillor I. Parry

Councillor Parry was not in attendance at the meeting.

GP20/154 Representations from Members of the Public

None

GP20/155 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on the
3 December (Minute Numbers GP20/132 – GP20/149), be approved as a
correct record.

GP20/156 Minutes of Sub-Committees

- a) Environment Sub-Committee held on 17 December 2019 (Minute
Numbers ENV20/024 – ENV20/030), that the draft minutes be noted and
the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute
Numbers ENV20/028 and ENV20/029 be adopted. The recommendations

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contained in Minute Number ENV20/030 were considered under Minute Number GP20/157, as part of the Council's budget recommendations.

- b) Management Sub-Committee held on 17 December 2019 (Minute Numbers MAN20/022 – MAN20/027), that the draft minutes be noted. The recommendations contained in Minute Number MAN20/026 were considered under Minute Number GP20/157, as part of the Council's budget recommendations.
- c) Tourism Sub-Committee held on 7 January 2020 (Minute Numbers TTP20/029 – TTP20/036), that the draft minutes be noted and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number TTP20/034 be adopted. The recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number TTP20/035 were considered under Minute Number GP20/157, as part of the Council's budget recommendations.
- d) Estates Sub-Committee held on 7 January 2020 (Minute Numbers EST20/016 – EST20/023), that the draft minutes be noted and the recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Numbers EST20/020 and EST20/021 be adopted. The recommendations of the Sub-Committee contained in Minute Number EST20/023 were considered under Minute Number GP20/157, as part of the Council's budget recommendations.

GP20/157 2020-21 Budget for Recommendation to the Council

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk* (which had been circulated with the agenda) examining the budget and precept level for the financial year 2020-21 for recommendation to the Council.

An additional financial summary* containing recommendations from all Sub-Committees budget proposals to the Committee for 2020-21, indicative budgets for 2021-22 and 2022-23 and the potential impact on Council Tax, was issued at the meeting.

RESOLVED: To recommend to the Council:

- a) The base budget set out in the Clerk's report supplemented by the items below:

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
	£	£	£	£
From Sub-Committees:				
Community Centre Wi-Fi	3,000	540	540	540
Environmental Issues		2,000		
Single Use Plastics		750		
Path Across Amphitheatre		1,425		
Reinstating Meadow Paths		1,110		
Improvements to Meadow		1,400	1,300	1,300
War Memorial Refurb		5,000		
From GP Committee:				
Grants	-7,100	-2,100	-2,400	-2,700
Building Maintenance	-10,000			
Christmas Lighting		3,000		

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- b) A Council Tax increase of 1.1% for 2020-21 to £50.65 for a Band D property with further indicative increases of 1.1% in each of the following two years.
- c) To set a precept on Stafford Borough Council for 2020-21 of £310,649 plus Local Council Tax Support Grant of £18,399.

The Town Clerk and Chairman of the General Purposes Committee were thanked for their work on the budget recommendations.

GP20/158 RDPE Growth Programme

The Committee considered whether to authorise the Town Clerk to submit an expression of interest for a grant for Stone Heritage Centre under the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Programme.

A copy of the programme handbook had been attached to the electronic version of the agenda.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk is asked to submit an expression of interest on behalf of the Town Council for a grant for Stone Heritage Centre under the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Programme.

GP20/159 Car Parking in Stone

The Committee considered issues relating to car parking in Stone.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that he had written to Stafford Borough Council with observations on the Borough Council's proposal to introduce evening and weekend car park charges in Stone and that a copy of the comments had been made available to all Councillors.

The Committee was informed (by Councillor Leason) that the item had been raised at the Borough Council's Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee last week. The report showed that there had been no objections to the increases in Stafford, but a number of objections had been received to the Stone increases. In addition the likely annual profit would be £1,253,000 (Borough wide). He asked the reasons there was considered a need to increase the charges and was told it was to raise much needed revenue, particularly as government grants had decreased, and that spending was planned on resurfacing car parks, and in the longer term the provision of a multi storey car park in Stafford.

The Committee discussed the negative implications on traders in the High Street who are in need of support rather than increased car park charges. Members expressed the view that the charge would represent a second tax, and that Stone was being used to supplement Stafford Borough Council's budget deficit.

The Committee concluded that it would await a response from the Borough Council.

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GP20/160 Open Spaces Society

The Committee considered a letter from the Open Spaces Society appealing for a donation to its 'Legal Fund' which supports Society members in fighting legal cases in defence of commons, green spaces and rights of way.

A copy of the letter from the Open Spaces Society* had been attached to the agenda.

RESOLVED: That the request for a donation from the Open Spaces Society is declined.

GP20/161 Governance & Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England

The Committee reviewed the designated signatories for the Town Council's bank reconciliation process, following the parish elections in May 2019. Currently just three (out of a total of six) signatories continue to hold office as members of the Council.

RESOLVED: That Councillors: A. Best, J. Davies and P. Leason are appointed as signatories, to join the existing members authorised to sign the Town Council's Bank Reconciliations.

GP20/162 Non-Cheque Payments

RESOLVED: To note the list* of non-cheque payments made by the Council during the period 1 November to 30 November 2019.

GP20/163 Update from Working Groups:

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the draft Stone Neighbourhood Plan was with Stafford Borough Council and was working through the system. The Borough Council's target date for arranging a referendum is May 2020 when the Police and Crime Commissioner elections will take place.

Stone Area Parish Liaison Group

Councillor Davies advised the Committee that a useful and helpful meeting of Stone Area Parish Liaison Group took place last week. The meeting was well attended by representatives of neighbouring parishes and a number of common issues were discussed including car parking, HS2 and Neighbourhood Planning.

Traffic Management in Stone Working Group

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that the next meeting of the working group would be held in two weeks.

VE Day 2020 Commemoration Working Group

Councillor Kenney advised the Committee that a meeting had been arranged with the Marketing and Events Assistant on Friday to discuss the VE Day 2020 arrangements.

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GP20/164 To receive reports from Town Councillors on attendance at meetings of local organisations and outside bodies as a representative of the Town Council

Stone ATC

Councillor Davies advised that a recent meeting of Stone ATC had been cancelled and he was awaiting a new date.

Age Concern Stone & District

Councillor Thornicroft informed the Committee about the methods through which funds had been generated by Age Concern which included a Tombola, cheques received from Stone Festival and donations from satisfied clients. A successful quiz night is planned for March and another Tombola event in June.

The Charity is looking to recruit new volunteers, both in the office and to support the hospital driving scheme.

Stafford & Stone Access Group

Councillor T. Kelt advised that a meeting of the Access Group had been deferred to next week. He said that since the last meeting, the Traders Group had submitted a survey for the town and the results are awaited.

Stone Common Plot Trustees

Councillor Kenney advised that no meeting had taken place.

Stone Community Hub Liaison Group

Councillor Powell advised that no meeting had taken place.

SPCA Executive Committee

Councillor Green advised that he had attended a meeting of the Executive Committee last week. The topics under consideration included the poor condition of the road in Staffordshire (potholes) and the desire to introduce a 20mph speed limit on the roads serving all schools in the County.

GP20/165 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting whilst the next items of business are discussed on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the debate

RESOLVED: To exclude the Press and Public from the next item of business.

GP20/166 Confidential Minutes

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Confidential Minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on the 3 December 2019 (Minute Numbers GP20/132 and GP20/149), be approved as a correct record.

CHAIRMAN

* Items marked with an asterisk refer to reports or papers circulated with the agenda or distributed at the meeting. They are attached as an appendix to the signed copy of the Council minutes.

Introduction

1. This report considers the setting of the Town Council's Budget for 2020-21, with indicative figures for the following two years.

Background

2. At a series of meetings during December 2019 and January 2020, the General Purposes Committee and its Sub-Committees considered their potential budgets for 2020-21 to 2022-23. As a result of this consideration, the General Purposes Committee on 21st January 2020 recommended a budget for approval by the Council.
3. The budget proposed by the General Purposes Committee is set out at Appendix A. It can be summarised as follows:

Actual		Budget	Forecast	Budget	Budget	Budget
2018-19		2019-20	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
£		£	£	£	£	£
33,703	Estates	32,400	22,300	42,740	60,840	62,240
15,408	Environment	24,910	22,200	25,345	20,560	21,060
35,471	Tourism & Town Promotion	36,100	35,000	42,600	36,700	37,700
174,844	Management	226,600	223,500	208,000	207,500	211,800
5,502	Neighbourhood Plan	9,900	2,000	7,900	-	-
-	General Purposes	125,000	125,000	55,000	-	-
-19,462	Earmarked Reserves	-134,710	-126,810	-7,900	-	-
245,465	TOTAL	320,200	303,190	373,685	325,600	332,800
	Planned Contribution to (from) Balances			-44,638	15,359	19,451
	Precept Required (including LCTSG)			329,047	340,959	352,251
	Band D Council Tax Equivalent			50.65	51.20	51.76

4. The Council is not required to accept the above budget, and is free to set the Council Tax at whatever level it thinks appropriate. The rest of this report does, however, assume the acceptance of the proposed budget, and a number of the comments made below may need to be reconsidered if the budget changes.

Robustness of Budget

5. In setting its budget and precept, the Council must determine:
- The estimated expenditure for the year.
 - Such allowances as it considers appropriate for contingencies.
 - Such financial reserves as the Council considers appropriate to raise in the year.
 - Such reserves as are sufficient to meet any revenue account deficit from any earlier year.
6. These issues have been considered as part of the budget setting process so far, and have resulted in the proposed budget under consideration today.
7. The Clerk's role, as Responsible Financial Officer, is to advise members on the robustness of their plans, and in particular the adequacy of their reserves to meet possible future issues.
8. Excluding the reserves previously earmarked for the Crown Wharf project, the Neighbourhood Plan, and rollovers, the Council held balances of £194,117 at the beginning of 2019-20. These are forecast to increase to around £207,185 by the end of the current year as follows:

	£
Opening Balances – 1 st April 2019	194,117
Planned Contribution to 2019-20 Budget from Balances	-16,542
Budget Adjustments (net) ¹	+12,600
Forecast Underspending 2019-20	+17,010
	<u>+13,068</u>
Forecast Balances – 31 st March 2020	<u>207,185</u>

9. As can be seen from the table in paragraph 3 above, the three-year budget proposed by the General Purposes Committee would result in movements in these balances as follows:

	Budgeted Contribution to (from) Balances £	Estimated General Fund Balance £	Number of Months Net Expenditure
31 March 2020	-	207,185	-
31 March 2021	-44,638	162,547	5.2
31 March 2022	15,359	177,906	6.3
31 March 2023	19,451	197,357	6.8

¹ NOTE: This represents the supplementary estimate approved within the year for the new post of Events and Marketing Assistant and the adjustments to grants, building maintenance and community centre wi-fi proposed by the General Purposes Committee as part of this budget. All other adjustments were balanced by contributions from the Rollover Reserve.

10. I would recommend that a Council the size of Stone Town Council should hold general reserves equivalent to around six to nine months' net expenditure. It can be seen from the above table that this is not forecast to be achieved in 2020-21, though reserves do regenerate to this level by March 2022 and increase further by March 2023.
11. With the buffer provided by the Crown Wharf reserve potentially being lost due to the project now coming forward, there will be more limited scope than usual to deal with unforeseen events over the next few years. Even bearing this in mind, however, holding reserves equivalent to only 5.2 months spending at 31st March 2021 does not appear to represent an unacceptable risk given that the reserves are expected to regenerate during 2021-22, and some spending during 2020-21 could be delayed or cancelled should an emergency arise.
12. On this basis, I am able to advise the Council that reserves should be adequate to ensure that the Council's current plans can be reasonably sustained into the future. This will, however, need to be monitored throughout the year and examined very closely when the 2021-22 budget is considered next January/February.

Council Tax Leaflet

13. The Council also needs to determine the wording to be used on the Council Tax leaflet.
14. The wording for 2019-20 was:

"Stone Town Council provides services for the people and town of Stone.

These services include the provision of community facilities, such as the Frank Jordan and Stone Station community centres, free car parks, allotment sites at Newcastle Road and Mount Road, Station Road Conveniences, and the Crown Meadow Nature Reserve and amphitheatre

Investing in and working to promote a vibrant town and encourage visitors is a key Town Council priority. In order to support this, the Council organises regular events such as the summer Music Festival, the Town Market, the monthly Craft Market and a number of late night shopping evenings. Christmas lights are provided in the High Street and at Walton, with the Council's annual switch-on event becoming one of highlights of the town year. The High Street environment is enhanced by the Council's provision of hanging baskets along the High Street, and newly refurbished noticeboards and fingerposts throughout the town.

The Council provides bus shelters, benches and dog bins throughout the area and takes responsibility for the upkeep of many local amenities and planted areas. It also provides grants to help charitable and community organisations such as the Stone Community Hub, supports various festivals, and the office supplies daily support and advice to local residents.

By considering the impact of every planning application, the Council seeks to develop and conserve the town, and is currently preparing a Neighbourhood Plan that will help to shape and protect the future of Stone for years to come.

This year, provision has been made for the setup and running costs of the new Heritage Centre, which will form part of the exciting redevelopment of Crown Wharf.

At its monthly meetings the Council welcomes questions from the public and sets aside time to listen and respond. Assistance with public questions will gladly be given by the Council's staff."

15. Members are asked to consider the wording for the 2020-21 leaflet.

Recommendations

16. That the Council determines its budget and Council Tax for 2020-21, indicative budgets for 2021-22 and 2022-23, and the wording of the Council Tax leaflet.

Stone Town Council

Proposed Budget 2020-21 to 2022-23

Actual 2018-19 £		Budget 2019-20 £	Forecast 2019-20 £	Budget 2020-21 £	Budget 2021-22 £	Budget 2022-23 £
15,363	Frank Jordan Centre	7,800	4,400	3,500	3,600	3,700
8,747	Stone Station	10,500	10,900	9,740	10,040	10,340
-	Stone Heritage Centre	-	-	20,000	41,000	42,200
-5,171	Town Market	-13,200	-10,100	-10,400	-10,700	-11,000
4,340	Car Parking	4,500	100	-	-	-
8,908	Bus Shelters & Street Furniture	4,600	4,600	7,900	4,900	5,000
-	Public Conveniences	6,600	-	-	-	-
782	Street Lighting	500	600	600	600	600
405	Dog & Litter Bins	700	700	700	700	700
-	Joules Clock	300	1,000	300	300	300
329	Town Electricity Supply	400	400	400	400	400
-	Building Maintenance	9,700	9,700	10,000	10,000	10,000
15,145	Grounds Maintenance	18,200	17,300	16,600	17,100	17,600
1,432	Crown Meadow Improvements	2,860	3,700	5,935	3,400	3,400
-1,168	Allotments	3,850	1,200	60	60	60
-	Environmental Initiatives	-	-	2,750	-	-
12,975	Christmas Lights	15,000	16,000	19,000	16,500	16,900
60	Advertising	-	-	-	-	-
18,909	Tourism & Town Promotion	21,100	19,000	23,600	20,200	20,800
3,527	Community Bus	-	-	-	-	-
4,637	Grants	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
141,081	Salaries & Employment Costs	150,300	149,000	158,300	161,600	164,700
4,455	Accommodation	4,200	4,100	4,500	4,600	4,800
8,073	Insurances	8,500	6,500	6,700	6,900	7,100
19,169	Administration	29,800	29,800	23,000	23,700	24,400
2,632	Audit & Legal Fees	1,200	1,200	2,000	2,000	2,000
-	Town Council Elections	28,000	28,000	-	-	-
2,250	Allowances - Mayor & Deputy Mayor	3,200	3,200	3,300	3,400	3,500
223	Regalia & Presentations	500	950	500	500	500
1,681	Civic Dinner & Hospitality	1,500	1,700	1,700	1,700	1,700
1,856	Remembrance Sunday & War Memorials	2,000	2,000	7,000	2,100	2,100
818	Miscellaneous	1,500	1,400	5,000	5,000	5,000
-572	Interest	-600	-850	-500	-500	-500
5,502	Neighbourhood Plan	9,900	2,000	7,900	-	-
-	Stone Heritage Centre (Capital)	125,000	125,000	55,000	-	-
-11,461	Concurrent Functions Allowance	-11,500	-11,500	-11,500	-11,500	-11,500
-7,002	Neighbourhood Plan Reserve	-9,900	-2,000	-7,900	-	-
-8,460	Rollover Reserve	-24,810	-24,810	-	-	-
-	Crown Wharf Reserve	-100,000	-100,000	-	-	-
-4,000	WW1 Reserve	-	-	-	-	-
245,465		320,200	303,190	373,685	325,600	332,800
	Planned Contribution to (from) Balances			-44,638	15,359	19,451
	Precept Required (incl LCTSG)			329,047	340,959	352,251
	Band D Council Tax Equivalent			50.65	51.20	51.76

Stone Town Council

Local Government Transparency Code 2015

Information for Quarter Ended 31st December 2019

Expenditure Exceeding £250

Date	Reference	Supplier	Description	Amount	Month
02/10/2019	Elec 19/027	Current Electrical & Property Services	Setting up marquees - Sept 19	£555.00	Oct-19
03/10/2019	Elec 19/027	Stafford Borough Council	Instal & remove bollards July-Sept 19	£387.00	Oct-19
03/10/2019	D/Dbt 19/010	Stafford Borough Council	Rates - FJC	£427.00	Oct-19
09/10/2019	Elec 19/028	B Hygienic Ltd	Hygiene services - FJC	£854.50	Oct-19
14/10/2019	Elec 19/029	M J Plant	Supply skip - Mt Rd Allot	£315.00	Oct-19
14/10/2019	Elec 19/029	M J Plant	Grounds maint	£1,409.00	Oct-19
21/10/2019	Elec 19/030	Prism Solutions	Laptop, software & setting up	£1,530.65	Oct-19
25/10/2019	D/Dbt 19/010	Prism Solutions	ICT Provision	£574.04	Oct-19
28/10/2019	Elec19/031	J G Fenn Ltd	Stationery	£286.75	Oct-19
30/10/2019	Elec19/031	E On	Street lighting maint - 2019-20	£584.67	Oct-19
04/11/2019	Elec 19/033	Current Electrical & Property Services	Marquees for Morruis dancers	£540.00	Nov-19
04/11/2019	D/Dbt 19/011	Stafford Borough Council	Rates - FJC	£427.00	Nov-19
05/11/2019	Elec 19/033	Stone Gazette Ltd	Advert - switch -on	£315.00	Nov-19
05/11/2019	Elec 19/033	PC World Business	Ipad & pencil - new post	£497.46	Nov-19
11/11/2019	Elec 19/034	The Secret Kitchen	4 Reception - Rem Sun 19	£540.00	Nov-19
13/11/2019	Elec 19/034	M J Plant	Maint - bus shelters	£495.00	Nov-19
13/11/2019	Elec 19/034	M J Plant	Grounds maint - Oct 19	£1,409.00	Nov-19
20/11/2019	PC World Bus	PC World Business	Ipad & pencil - new post	£497.46	Nov-19
20/11/2019	PC World Bus	PC World Business	Printer	£369.99	Nov-19
22/11/2019	D/Dbt 19/011	British Gas	Gas-FJC - Oct 19	£264.41	Nov-19
25/11/2019	D/Dbt 19/011	Prism Solutions	ICT Provision	£696.22	Nov-19
26/11/2019	Current Electrical & Property S	Current Electrical & Property Services	Temporary power to stage & marquees - Switch-On	£550.00	Nov-19
02/12/2019	Elec 19/037	Current Electrical & Property Services	Setting up Nov 19	£810.00	Dec-19
03/12/2019	Elec 19/037	Miscellaneous	12 x xmas trees - Town Ctre	£324.00	Dec-19
03/12/2019	D/Dbt 19/013	Stafford Borough Council	Rates - FJC	£427.00	Dec-19
05/12/2019	Elec 19/037	Empire Hire Ltd	Stage, mics, barriers - Switch-On	£1,575.00	Dec-19

17/12/2019	Elec19/040	Stafford Borough Council	Inst & removal of bollards - Oct 19-March20	£387.00	Dec-19
18/12/2019	Elec19/040	M J Plant	Cenotaph maint & refurb at Walton	£706.00	Dec-19
18/12/2019	Elec19/040	M J Plant	Grounds maint - town borders & Walton Rabt	£3,887.00	Dec-19
20/12/2019	Elec19/040	Current Electrical & Property Services	To supply electricity to Walton Shops Lights	£1,487.00	Dec-19
20/12/2019	Elec19/040	Christmas Plus	Installation of xmas lights (70%)	£3,861.90	Dec-19
20/12/2019	D/Dbt 19/013	British Gas	Gas FJC - Nov 19	£401.35	Dec-19
23/12/2019	D/Dbt 19/013	British Gas	Gas - STN - Nov 19	£392.79	Dec-19
23/12/2019	Elec 19/041	Current Electrical & Property Services	Setting up of marquees Dec 19	£900.00	Dec-19
27/12/2019	D/Dbt 19/013	Prism Solutions	ICT Provision	£635.13	Dec-19
31/12/2019	D/Dbt 19/013	The Arch Rent Collectors	Rent of Stone Station building	£1,087.50	Dec-19

NOTE: The table above excludes salary and related payments, payments from the Mayor's Charity, and transfers between the Council's bank accounts.

Stone Town Council

Local Government Transparency Code 2015

Information for Quarter Ended 31st December 2019

Procurement Information

1. Invitations to Tender for Contracts Exceeding £5,000

None

2. Contracted Agreements Exceeding £5,000

None

Stone Town Council

Openness of Public Bodies Regulations 2014

Information for Quarter Ended 31st December 2019

Decisions that would otherwise have been taken by the Town Council or one of its Committees that have been delegated to an officer:

1. Under a specific express authorisation; or
2. Under a general authorisation to officers to take such decisions and, the effect of the decision is to:
 - a. grant a permission or licence;
 - b. affect the rights of an individual; or
 - c. award a contract or incur expenditure which, in either case, materially affects the Town Council's financial position.

None

STONE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
4 FEBRUARY 2020

CIVIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor

Friday 7 February	Stafford Borough Mayor's Charity Ball
Sunday 9 February	Lichfield Mayor and Sheriff Charity Sunday Lunch
Saturday 15 February	Stone Lions Charter Anniversary Dinner & Dance
Sunday 16 February	Stafford & Stone Canoe Club Winter Mini Series
Friday 21 February	Staffordshire Moorlands Charity Quiz Night
Friday 28 February	Cannock Chase Council Chairman's Black Country Night
Monday 2 March	Aston Cubs Visit to Council Chamber

Deputy Mayor

No Report

TOWN MAYOR

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – to 26 January 2020

Friday 29th November

Tonight was the Uttoxeter Christmas Lights Switch On. We all met up in the Town Hall for mulled wine and mince pies. Following this the Mayor arrived on a sleigh pulled by reindeer and she then switched on the lights.

Sunday 1 December – Tuesday 24 December

Every day, with the exception of Sunday the 15th we attended the opening of the Advent Windows in Stone. This is run by Christ Church. The list is attached to this report.

Wednesday 4th December

We went along to Kiddlestone Scout Camp where they held a Carols Service which included sketches from local scouts and their leaders.

Sunday 8th December

Today was the first Santa Bed Race to be held in Stone. The event was organised by the Stone Festival. There were only four entries, but that's not bad because it is a new event.

In the afternoon the Civic Carol Service was held in St. Michael's Church. It was good to see so many people in attendance. Many thanks go to all those who read the various lessons. It was also attended by the Borough Mayor.

Tuesday 10th December

Today was the turn of the Trinity Skills for Life Carol Service held in St. Michael's Church. The students had worked very hard to tell the Christmas Story. It included carols signed by their Signing Choir.

In the evening we went to Aston Church for the Scouts Carol Service. After the service we went to Aston Village Hall where I was asked to give out awards to some of the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts.

Saturday 14th December

St. Michael's Church was the venue for the Carol Service for the Provincial Grand Lodge of Freemasons. The church was full of members from other parts of Staffordshire. We were made most welcome.

On this evening a Quiz was held at Wetherspoons in aid of the Crown Wharf Theatre Group. I'm afraid our team didn't win but never mind! The event was organised by A Little Bit of Stone.

Tuesday 17th December

Tonight we went to the performance of Peter Pan at the Gatehouse Theatre. It was a great performance and I believe it has been well received by everyone who went along to see it.

Thursday 19 December

Christ Church was where the Stone Choral Society held their Christmas Concert. The performance

was fantastic, as usual. There were plenty of chances for audience participation. The event was also very well attended.

Sunday 22nd December

This evening was the Stafford Borough Carol Service. It was held at St. Mary's Church, Stafford. The church looked lovely, all lit by candles. This service was also very well attended.

Christmas Day Wednesday 25th December

The residents of St. Mary's Home always look forward to the Mayor's visit. We both loved talking to the residents and their families. They always appreciate the visit before they tuck into a lovely lunch.

Sunday 29th December

Today we raised the flag of Texas on our flag pole. In 1845 Texas became part of the United States of America, and we acknowledge that event.

Sunday 12th January

Today the Lichfield Mayor held her Mayoral Service. It was held in the grandeur of the Guildhall in the middle of Lichfield. Many other Mayors and Chairmen attended.

Thursday 13 January

The Borough Mayor held a fundraising quiz in the Craddock Rooms at the Civic Centre. The quizmaster was Councillor Peter Jones. His quizzes are always a great deal of fun.

Friday 24th January

Tonight we held our Pig Race at the Stone Golf Club. It was very well attended and everyone had a good time watching the fluffy pink pigs race. Thank you to Councillor Jim Davies for being our MC for the evening. The Lord Mayor of Stoke on Trent thought it was a brilliant idea. Thanks to all those who gave the prizes and helped out in any way.

DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – to 26 January 2020

No report

Advent Windows 2019

1 st Sunday Christ Church	O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (Oulton Church)
2 nd Monday Dunoon's	It came Upon a Midnight Clear (Dunoon Ceramics)
3 rd Tuesday Cat Protection	It was on a Starry Night (Christ Church First School)
4 th Wednesday Mayfair's	On Christmas Night all Christians Sing (Oulton 1 st School)
5 th Thursday Shear Genius	See Amid the Winters Snow (Christ Church Academy)
6 th Friday Vantage Point	In the Bleak Midwinter (St. Dominic's Priory)
7 th Saturday Stone Library	The Holly and the Ivy (Hub Craft Group)
8 th Sunday The Mill	Little Donkey (Oaktree Rural Farm Project)
9 th Monday John Burton	Hark the Herald Angels Sing (Pirehill First School)
10 th Tuesday Co-op Funeral Care	We Three Kings (Smarty's Day Nursery)
11 th Wednesday Lock-Keepers Salon	What Child is This (St. Dominic's Primary)
12 th Thursday Co-op Funeral Care	Go Tell it on the Mountain (St Michael's 1 st School)
13 th Friday Home and Colour	Once in Royal David's City (Walton Priory)
14 th Saturday AED Donate	While Shepherds Watched (Oulton Abbey Pre-School)

15 th Sunday The Lounge	As with Gladness Men of Old (Meaford Day Nursery)
16 th Monday Katherine House	The First Noel (Alleyne's Academy)
17 th Tuesday Children's Society	O little town of Bethlehem (Trinity Skills)
18 th Wednesday Autocare	Infant Holy, Infant Lowly (Elmhurst Pre-school)
19 th Thursday M-Viron	The Angel Gabriel (Little Stars)
20 th Friday Celia's	Away in a Manger (Giggles and Wiggles)
21 st Saturday Fish Records	Ding Dong Merrily on High (W.I.)
22 nd Sunday Stone Pharmacy	I Saw Three Ships (Meaford Fields Day Nursery)
23 rd Monday 3B Barbers	Little Jesus Sweetly Sleep (Mumbles Day Nursery)
24 th Tuesday Christ Church	Unto us a Boy is Born (Christ Church)